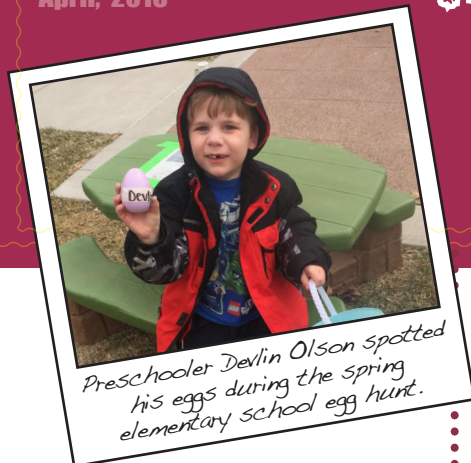


# the **hobo**cat



*Preschooler Devlin Olson spotted his eggs during the spring elementary school egg hunt.*

## Student scores exceed expectations

**Results of ISD's fall assessments show big gains in student learning**

From fall, 2016 to fall, 2017, the number of students growing in reading increased by 9%. That means 78% of our 3rd – 11th grade students are gaining ground in reading.

And it gets better: the number of students showing growth in math increased by 14% in the same time frame, and now 81% of these 3rd – 11th grade students are also improving their math skills.

How did our faculty accomplish these impressive gains? According to Rebecca Gaw, ISD principal, they've been honing in on intensive strategies that are based on data, including:

- Making instructional changes to reflect our needs
- Utilizing professional learning communities within our faculty and increasing staff collaboration
- Finding extra class time to focus on core instruction and interventions
- Getting students involved and

*continued inside*

## spring brings budding artists

Even when the trees weren't blooming, ISD art students were blossoming with talent.

Art teacher Sarah Wiberg submitted student entries into the annual Marie Jean Philip art contest, hosted by Northeastern University in Massachusetts. Wiberg was notified this spring that Autumn Winter earned 3rd place in the 13 – 18 year-old category for deaf art. Izabelle Schon earned 2nd place in the special needs category for those 12 years old and younger.

Entries are accepted into the divisions of poetry, storytelling and art. The contest is named in honor of Philip for her advocacy of American Sign Language and Deaf culture.

The competition's goal is to provide a forum for public recognition of the creativity and talent of deaf and hard of hearing students. ■

## Planning for

D, I, S, A, S, T, E, R,

**It's a good start.** In the fall of 2016, ISD put the national standard response protocol in place, providing uniform response to any school emergency. Every classroom also has a copy of the ISD crisis management procedures prominently posted. Both measures are a solid base as ISD enhances its Emergency Operations Plan (EOP).

*continued inside*



*About two dozen schools entered this year's national event.*

## Many subjects; one focus

A serving of science, dash of art, a sprinkle of social studies and a garnish of language arts were the ingredients for a middle school landforms unit this winter.

This multi-class approach included students making clay models of landforms, writing research papers, creating posters and formally presenting the finished projects.

Other recent middle school studies included:

- the use of similes, metaphors and hyperboles in language arts
- a diversity lesson which included a field trip to Hope Mission and the Omaha Hispanic/Latino Museum



*Eighth grader Jesse Dalley explains how his class located tectonic plates across the globe and plotted them as part of a unit in landforms.*

- the five senses in health class
- proportions as tables, graphs and equations in math
- primary colors and Pop Art in art
- mitosis and meiosis in life science and plate tectonics in earth science.

## Exceeding expectations

*continued from front page*

setting achievement goals with them

- Aligning our curriculum with assessment and interventions
- Working with deaf education experts and our local AEA
- Implementing new programs.

Gaw announced the super scores with a special faculty and school staff assembly before passing the news to students.

.....  
**450 people were on campus for the ISD Deaf Cultural Celebration held on campus March 23 & 24. About 50 families with school-age children who are deaf or hard of hearing attended from Iowa, Nebraska, South Dakota and Illinois.**

## Planning for D, I, S, A, S, T, E, R,

*continued from front page* .....

But there's more. "This focuses on what to do during an event, whereas we need to also focus on what to do before, during and after an emergency," said Deb Schwiesow, who is an Area Education Agency school psychologist working with members of ISD's staff to build an even stronger EOP.

Under Schwiesow's direction, 15 ISD staff members are being guided through a national school crisis prevention and intervention training curriculum. Members also have the opportunity to take online Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) training.

"We need to be ready for any one of us to step up- we can't be sure who will be here in an emergency," said John Cool, ISD assistant administrator. "Every staff member needs to know what to do."

Currently, the group is completing in-depth campus assessments

which analyze vulnerability to such emergencies as fire, bomb threats, intruders, chemical spills and others.

The large EOP group divided into teams, and in some cases, added adjunct members. The first hurdles to tackle are vulnerability assessments.

**"We all own the safety of the campus."**

– Deb Schwiesow

These assessments address areas such as parking lots, the cafeteria, hallways, restrooms, athletic fields and playgrounds.

Vulnerability assessments also address campus-wide considerations, such as communication and emergency notification, building access and personal identification, behavior interventions and conduct.

The large EOP group meets monthly to evaluate and discuss findings,

and to determine next steps. Joining them are representatives from outside agencies including hospital emergency personnel behavioral health services and Pottawattamie County Emergency Management Services. ■



*The EOP team meets monthly to build a comprehensive emergency operations plan.*



**Register your child today [here](#)** for upcoming free, fun events hosted by Iowa School for the Deaf! These events are intended for 1st-12th grade children who are deaf or hard of hearing living either in the metro area (May 2 event) or Des Moines (May 12 event). Parents are welcome.



Email [tapeterson@iowaschoolforthe deaf.org](mailto:tapeterson@iowaschoolforthe deaf.org) for details.

## Sharing their world with peers

“Deaf are not different.” Senior Erica Bloomhall wants everyone, especially in her Lewis Central sociology class to know, “We deaf can’t hear but can do anything else normal as hearing people.”

She and classmate Elizabet Topete, who are both ISD students enrolled in some classes at local public schools, gave impromptu descriptions of Deaf culture during a Lewis Central sociology class discussion about culture. The girls engaged their class (and, by popular demand, another sociology section as well) in questions and answers



*ISD students enroll into mainstream classes as IEPs indicate. Shown are Elizabet Topete (left), Lewis Central sociology teacher John Drake and Erica Bloomhall after their April Deaf Culture discussion.*

“I wasn’t surprised by their questions, but I was impressed that the group asked us a lot of questions and were curious about our Deaf world,” said Bloomhall.

“I hope they are starting to understand Deaf culture and how we feel around them,” said Topete. “It would be good to have them learn ASL or them not be afraid to chat when they see Deaf

students around Lewis Central. It would be good for them to know how Deaf people have struggled all these years of communicating and have them spread the word to many people about Deaf culture so the Deaf community can be known around here.” ■

## 2018 camps welcome you!

This year’s ISD camp themes include creativity with **art, football, volleyball and hunting for treasure**. Week-long camps are just \$50 for Iowa residents (scholarships are available). Camps are communication-friendly! Register today by clicking **HERE** or emailing [belliff@iowaschoolforthe deaf.org](mailto:belliff@iowaschoolforthe deaf.org).

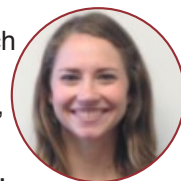
## Employee news



■ **Matthew Lee** started employment in the facilities department in late January.

■ **Johanna Scherling**

began working in March as secretary with the Deaf Resource Center, State Consultant and Outreach departments.



■ Congratulations to ISD retirees who retired this winter: **Susan Wallace**, (secretary) retired in January; **Cathy Miller** (bus driver) and **Jane Sorenson** (cook) retired in February.

■ Iowa School for the Deaf remembers our retirees who recently passed away. **Sue Meidlinger** (elementary faculty) died in February. **LaMar Prail** (long-term sub in dorms) died in April.

■ **Steve Gettel** (superintendent), and his wife, Mary, are grandparents to grandson Augustus, born February 22.

■ We extend our sympathy to **Rebecca Gaw** (principal) whose niece died in February.

■ We express our condolences to **Jennifer Herzog** (high school faculty) whose mother died in March.

■ Our sympathy to **John Cool** (assistant administrator) and **Liz Gates** (transportation manager), whose stepfather died in April.

## A job well done

**Beth Chadwick** (high school faculty) and **Dee Willer** (health center nurse) were recognized for their excellence in performing their jobs at Iowa School for the Deaf. The two were honored at the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, meeting held April 12 at ISD.



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## Earning their wheels

Three ISD boys in the residential program benefited from the Omaha Community Bike Project this winter. Student Life Advisor Taryn Peterson, who coordinated ISD's participation, said the boys attended 6 classes to learn about repair, maintenance and safe riding skills. Then, they could take home a bike, helmet and lock with them without charge.

The trio even brought some bicycles from the dorm to this earn-a-bike program for repairs and tune-ups, just in time for spring rides.

"Community Bike project is a really great non-profit in Omaha that focuses on improving access to bikes for everyone as well as providing youth mentorship and community building," said Peterson.



*Jessie Murphy (front), Jesse Dalley (left) and Paul Coffin at the Community Bike Project.*

She said she hopes to bring more students to the project.

bobcat

April, 2018

## Their roots of optimism

Congratulations to the Iowa Communications Contest for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing students who presented their oratorical pieces themed, "Where are my roots of optimism?"

The April statewide contest yielded the following junior winners: Jesse Dalley, 1st place; Ryenne Frieze, 2nd place; and Damien Holste, 3rd place. Senior winners were Hannah Kohl, 1st place and winner of \$2,500 scholarship; Shayla Dobias, 2nd place and winner of \$1,500 scholarship; and Nathan Weigel, 3rd place and bronze medallion recipient. All of these students attend Iowa School for the Deaf.